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Consumer Expenditures in 2012

Abstract

[Excerpt] Consumer spending increased by 3.5 percent, based on 2012 data from the Consumer Expenditure Survey (CE). This is the second consecutive year that expenditures increased after 3 consecutive years of declining expenditures. Consumer units' (CUs) average annual expenditures increased from \$49,705 in 2011 to \$51,442 in 2012. With this increase, the 2012 level surpassed the 2008 spending level of \$50,486. Most of the rise in expenditures in 2012 was due to a rise in incomes from 2011 to 2012. Average annual income before taxes increased 3.0 percent; from \$63,685 in 2011 to \$65,596 in 2012. This is much higher than the 1.9-percent increase in 2011. Prices, as measured by the average annual change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U, U.S. city average, all items) rose by 2.1 percent in 2012; far below the 3.5-percent increase in spending. In 2011, prices increased by 3.2 percent, which was close to the 3.3-percent increase in spending that year. The remainder of this report highlights consumer spending patterns for 2012 from the CE. (For more information on the Consumer Expenditure Survey, see the technical notes at the end of this report.)

Keywords

consumers, spending, households, Consumer Price Index, CPI, Consumer Expenditure Survey, CES

Comments

Suggested Citation

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Consumer Expenditures in 2012



Consumer spending increased by 3.5 percent, based on 2012 data from the Consumer Expenditure Survey (CE). This is the second consecutive year that expenditures increased after 3 consecutive years of declining expenditures. Consumer units' (CUs) average annual expenditures increased from \$49,705 in 2011 to \$51,442 in 2012. With this increase, the 2012 level surpassed the 2008 spending level of \$50,486. Most of the rise in expenditures in 2012 was due to a rise in incomes from 2011 to 2012. Average annual income before taxes increased 3.0 percent; from \$63,685 in 2011 to \$65,596 in 2012. This is much higher than the 1.9-percent increase in 2011. Prices, as measured by the average annual change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U, U.S. city average, all items) rose by 2.1 percent in

2012; far below the 3.5-percent increase in spending. In 2011, prices increased by 3.2 percent, which was close to the 3.3-percent increase in spending that year. The remainder of this report highlights consumer spending patterns for 2012 from the CE. (For more information on the Consumer Expenditure Survey, see the technical notes at the end of this report.)

Developments in 2012

During 2012, consumers increased their spending in all but 1 of the 7 major categories of expenditures tracked: food, housing, apparel and services, transportation, healthcare, entertainment, and personal insurance and pensions. (See table A.) This is in comparison to 2011 when consumers increased their spending in all of the major categories. In 2012, expenditures increased by a range of 0.5 percent for housing to 8.5 percent for transportation. Apparel and services was the only major category for which spending decreased in 2012 (–0.2 percent). The increase in transportation expenditures

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CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table A

Average annual expenditures by major category of all consumer units and percent changes, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2009–2012							
Item	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percent change		
					2009–2010	2010–2011	2011–2012
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	120,847	121,107	122,287	124,416	...	...	...
Consumer unit characteristics:							
Income before taxes	\$62,857	\$62,481	\$63,685	\$65,596	-.6	1.9	3.0
Age of reference person	49.4	49.4	49.7	50.0	...	...	...
Average number in consumer unit:							
Persons	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	...	...	...
Children under 18	.6	.6	.6	.6	...	...	...
Persons 65 and older	.3	.3	.3	.3	...	...	...
Earners	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	...	...	...
Vehicles	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.9	...	...	...
Percent homeowner	66	66	65	64	...	...	...
Average annual expenditures	\$49,067	\$48,109	\$49,705	\$51,442	-2.0	3.3	3.5
Food	6,372	6,129	6,458	6,599	-3.8	5.4	2.2
Food at home	3,753	3,624	3,838	3,921	-3.4	5.9	2.2
Cereals and bakery products	506	502	531	538	-.8	5.8	1.3
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	841	784	832	852	-6.8	6.1	2.4
Dairy products	406	380	407	419	-6.4	7.1	2.9
Fruits and vegetables	656	679	715	731	3.5	5.3	2.2
Other food at home	1,343	1,278	1,353	1,380	-4.8	5.9	2.0
Food away from home	2,619	2,505	2,620	2,678	-4.4	4.6	2.2
Alcoholic beverages	435	412	456	451	-5.3	10.7	-1.1
Housing	16,895	16,557	16,803	16,887	-2.0	1.5	.5
Shelter	10,075	9,812	9,825	9,891	-2.6	.1	.7
Owned dwellings	6,543	6,277	6,148	6,056	-4.1	-2.1	-1.5
Rented dwellings	2,860	2,900	3,029	3,186	1.4	4.4	5.2
Other lodging	672	635	648	649	-5.5	2.0	.2
Utilities, fuels, and public services	3,645	3,660	3,727	3,648	.4	1.8	-2.1
Household operations	1,011	1,007	1,122	1,159	-.4	11.4	3.3
Housekeeping supplies	659	612	615	610	-7.1	.5	-.8
Household furnishings and equipment	1,506	1,467	1,514	1,580	-2.6	3.2	4.4
Apparel and services	1,725	1,700	1,740	1,736	-1.4	2.4	-.2
Transportation	7,658	7,677	8,293	8,998	.2	8.0	8.5
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	2,657	2,588	2,669	3,210	-2.6	3.1	20.3
Gasoline and motor oil	1,986	2,132	2,655	2,756	7.4	24.5	3.8
Other vehicle expenses	2,536	2,464	2,454	2,490	-2.8	-.4	1.5
Public and other transportation	479	493	516	542	2.9	4.7	5.0
Health care	3,126	3,157	3,313	3,556	1.0	4.9	7.3
Entertainment	2,693	2,504	2,572	2,605	-7.0	2.7	1.3
Personal care products and services	596	582	634	628	-2.3	8.9	-.9
Reading	110	100	115	109	-9.1	15.0	-5.2
Education	1,068	1,074	1,051	1,207	.6	-2.1	14.8
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	380	362	351	332	-4.7	-3.0	-5.4
Miscellaneous	816	849	775	829	4.0	-8.7	7.0
Cash contributions	1,723	1,633	1,721	1,913	-5.2	5.4	11.2
Personal insurance and pensions	5,471	5,373	5,424	5,591	-1.8	.9	3.1
Life and other personal insurance	309	318	317	353	2.9	-.3	11.4
Pensions and Social Security	5,162	5,054	5,106	5,238	-2.1	1.0	2.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

can largely be attributed to the 20.3-percent increase in vehicle purchases.

With the increase in average annual expenditures (3.5 percent) being higher than the increase in average income before taxes in 2012 (3.0 percent), this increase in spending coincided with a rise in consumer confidence. Consumer confidence levels increased a little in 2012, as reflected by the Consumer Confidence Index of the Conference Board, which registered an average level of 67 in 2012, up from 58 in 2011.¹ (The level is an index, with 1985 = 100. Levels of 100 or more reflect consumer optimism.) The improvement in consumer confidence may be in part due to a small, but gradual decrease in the unemployment rate in 2012. The unemployment rate, although lower, still remained above prerecession levels. According to the Current Population Survey (CPS), the average monthly national unemployment rate was 8.1 percent in 2012, lower than the average rate of 8.9 percent for 2011. The number of long-term (over 26 weeks) unemployed individuals, although declining from 6 million in 2011 to just over 5.1 million in 2012, was still higher than prerecession levels. In addition, this slight increase in consumer confidence may also be reflective of the gradual economic recovery, as evidenced by the 2.2-percent increase in real GDP in 2012.²

Expenditure shares. Table B provides the percent distribution of total annual expenditures by major expenditure categories for all consumer units, from 2009 to 2012. Expenditure shares usually do not fluctuate much in the short term and thus are more useful for identifying spending trends over time. As in previous years, housing is the largest component of overall expenditures, accounting for 32.8 percent of total expenditures in 2012. This was followed by transportation (17.5 percent) and food expenditures (12.8 percent). The most notable change in expenditure shares was in vehicle purchases, which increased to 6.2 percent of total expenditures in 2012, compared with 5.4 percent in 2011. In contrast, the expenditure share on shelter decreased to 19.2 percent in 2012, from 19.8 percent in 2011.

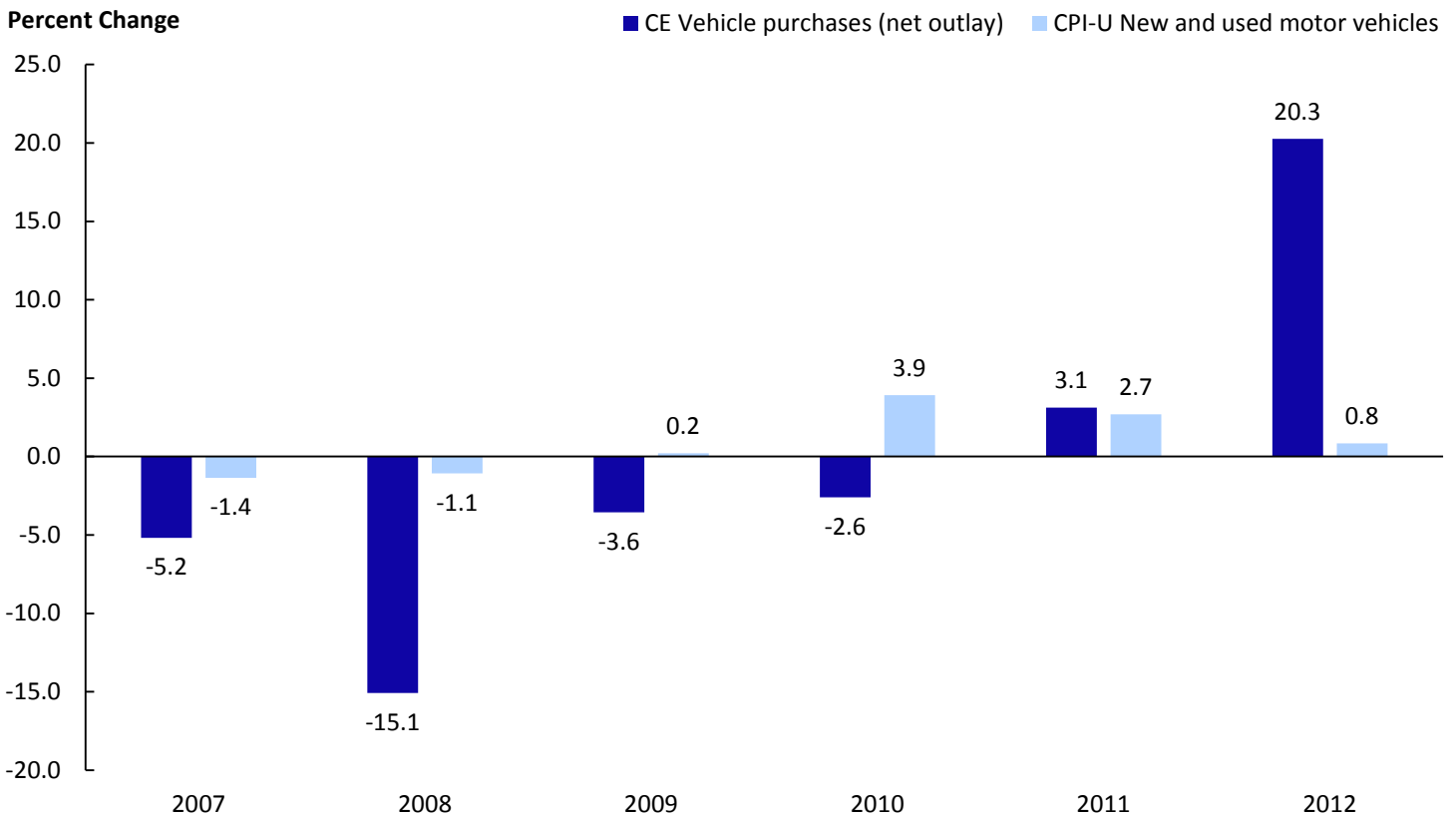
Housing. Spending on housing increased slightly in all but the third CU income quintile in 2012. The highest income

quintile exhibited the largest increase in spending on housing (1.3 percent), from \$29,321 in 2011 to \$29,705 in 2012. (See table 1.)

Homeowners continued to report declining expenditures on mortgage interest and charges; a trend since 2007. Homeowners spent 18.3 percent less on this component of housing in 2012 (\$4,735) than they did in 2007 (\$5,799). This is likely the result of the continuing trend of lower interest rates, which has been in place since the recession of December 2007—June 2009.

In addition, although the recession led to an overall trend of fewer CUs owning homes, results from the CE showed an increase of homeowners from 79.4 million in 2011, to 79.9 million in 2012. However, this is still below the prerecession level of 80.2 million homeowners in 2007. Concurrently, there has been an increase in renters since 2007. In 2012, there were 44.5 million renters, compared with 39.9 million in 2007. According to the CPI-U, rents for primary residences have increased 10.9 percent since 2007. During that same time span, the average annual rental payments reported in the CE increased 14 percent (\$8,812 in 2012, compared with \$7,732 in 2007), reflecting the increase in demand for rental units.

Vehicle purchases. Expenditures on vehicle purchases increased significantly in 2012, following a smaller increase in 2011. CUs spent 20.3 percent more in 2012 (\$3,210) than they did in 2011 (\$2,669). Within this increase, spending on new cars and trucks increased by 29.5 percent while spending on used cars and trucks increased by 13.2 percent. Despite this increase, expenditures on vehicle purchases remain below the prerecession level of \$3,244 in 2007. Chart 1 shows the correlation between changes in expenditures on vehicles and prices of new and used motor vehicles between 2007 and 2012. For the most part, change in consumer spending was more volatile than price change. From 2007 and 2008, annual consumer spending on vehicles dropped significantly while prices dropped modestly. Spending on vehicles continued to decrease until 2011, when the increase in spending (3.1 percent) was higher

Chart 1**Spending and price percent changes on vehicle purchases, Consumer Expenditure Survey (CE), Consumer Price Index (CPI), 2007–2012**

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

than the increase in prices for new and used vehicles (2.7 percent).

Vehicle purchases increased by double digits in every income quintile in 2012 with the highest increase (32 percent) occurring in the fourth income quintile. By age of reference person, all but one age group (55 to 64 years old) increased spending in 2012. The biggest increase was in the 65-to-74-year-old age group (61.1 percent), followed by the under-25-years age group (38.6 percent). It should be noted that vehicle purchases data can be volatile due to the lower reporting rate of vehicle purchases. However, the vehicle purchase reporting rate was similar from 2011 to 2012, suggesting consumers were buying more expensive vehicles.

Expenditures by income quintile: From 2010 through 2012, all five income quintiles increased expenditures.

However, chart 2 shows that there was a shift in the annual change in overall expenditure levels among income quintiles, between 2011 and 2012. From 2010 to 2011, the lowest (first) income quintile increased expenditures by 5.0 percent and the second income quintile increased by 6.0 percent. Conversely, the highest (fifth) income quintile increased expenditures by 1.8 percent. From 2011 to 2012, the highest income quintile increased expenditures by 5.1 percent whereas the lowest two quintiles had small increases of 0.7 percent for the lowest quintile and 1.7 percent for the second quintile. Within spending categories, the two highest income quintiles both increased expenditures on food, apparel and services, and education, whereas the two lowest quintiles decreased in these categories. The biggest increase between 2011 and 2012 was in education where the fourth income quintile increased expenditures by 26.5 percent and the highest income quintile increased expenditures by

Table B

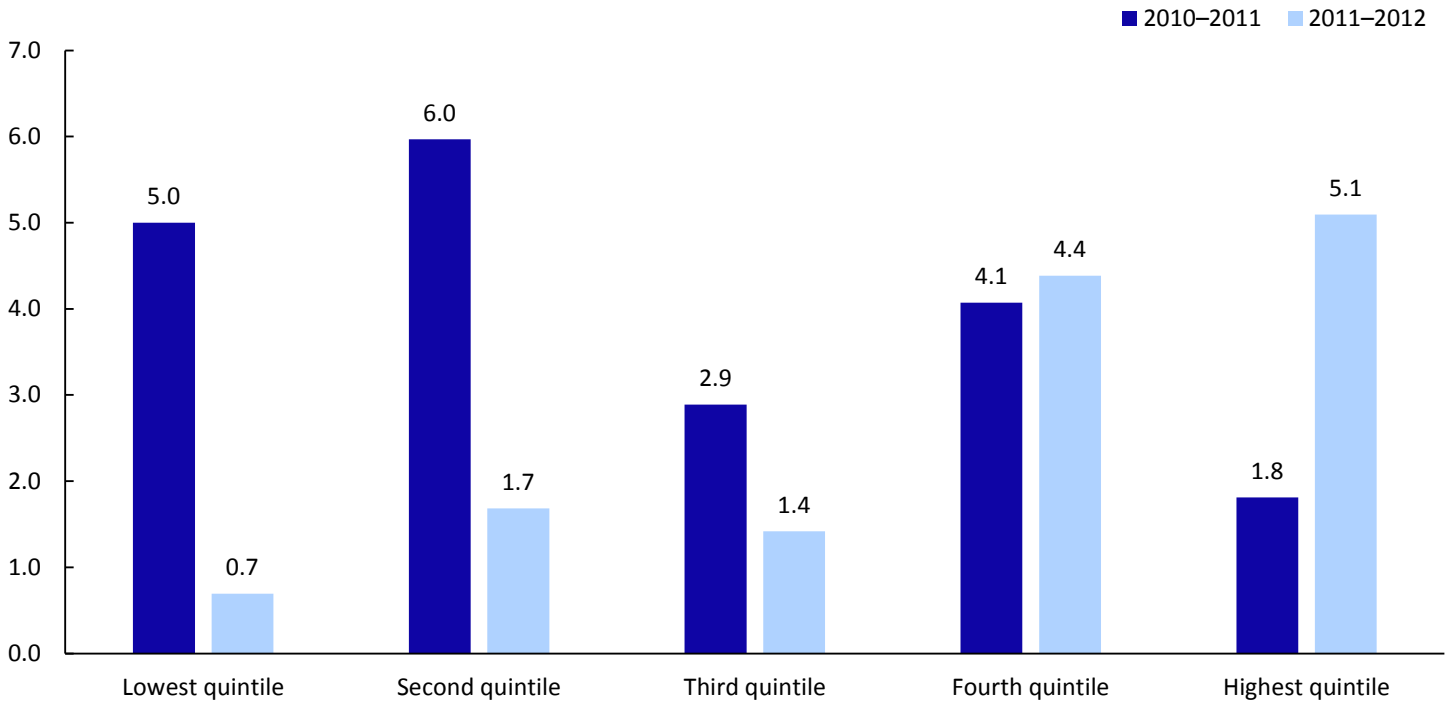
Percent distribution of total annual expenditures by major category for all consumer units, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2009–2012				
Spending category	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average annual expenditures	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Food	13.0	12.7	13.0	12.8
Food at home	7.6	7.5	7.7	7.6
Food away from home	5.3	5.2	5.3	5.2
Alcoholic beverages	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Housing	34.4	34.4	33.8	32.8
Shelter	20.5	20.4	19.8	19.2
Utilities, fuels, and public services	7.4	7.6	7.5	7.1
Household operations	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.3
Housekeeping supplies	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2
Household furnishings and equipment	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.1
Apparel and services	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4
Transportation	15.6	16.0	16.7	17.5
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	5.4	5.4	5.4	6.2
Gasoline and motor oil	4.0	4.4	5.3	5.4
Other vehicle expenses	5.2	5.1	4.9	4.8
Public and other transportation	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1
Health care	6.4	6.6	6.7	6.9
Entertainment	5.5	5.2	5.2	5.1
Personal care products and services	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.2
Reading	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Education	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.3
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6
Miscellaneous	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.6
Cash contributions	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.7
Personal insurance and pensions	11.2	11.2	10.9	10.9
Life and other personal insurance	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7
Pensions and Social Security	10.5	10.5	10.3	10.2

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

31.5 percent. This was primarily due to increases in college tuition expenditures.

Food: Expenditures on food increased for all but the lowest two income quintiles in 2012. This differs from 2011, when food expenditures increased in all income quintiles. In 2012, the fourth income quintile registered the largest percentage increase in food expenditures, an increase of 4.9 percent from \$7,466 in 2011, to \$7,831. This reflected a 5.3-percent increase in food at

home spending and a 4.4-percent increase in food away from home expenditures. The first and second income quintiles had decreases in overall food expenditures of 1.3 percent and 2.9 percent, respectively. This contrasts with increases of 7.2 percent (lowest quintile) and 10.6 percent (second quintile) in 2011. The decrease in food spending for the lowest income quintile was spread evenly among the food subcomponents: food at home decreased by 1.3 percent and food away from home decreased by 1.2

Chart 2**Percent change in Average Annual Expenditures by Income Quintile, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2010–2012**

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

percent. There was an increase in food expenditures for all age groups except the 35- to 44-year-old and 65-year-and older-age groups between 2011 and 2012. The 25- to 34-year-old-age group had the highest percentage increase in overall food expenditures, with spending rising 4.9 percent in 2012. Spending on food for the older age groups decreased by 0.2 percent for the 65- to 74-year-old group and by 6.1 percent for the 75 years and older group. This differs from 2011, where both of these age groups increased spending on food.

Endnotes

1. For more information regarding the Conference Board Consumer Confidence Survey, see: http://future.aac.wisc.edu/data/monthly_values/by_area/998?area=US.
2. For more information on the Bureau of Economic Analysis 2012 real GDP release, see: http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/national/gdp/2013/gdp4q12_3rd.htm.
3. In 2012, BLS published two education tables: education of reference person and highest education level of any member. Beginning in 2013, only the table, highest education level of any member will be published.

Statistical Tables

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table 1. Quintiles of income before taxes: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2012

Item	All consumer units	Lowest 20 percent	Second 20 percent	Third 20 percent	Fourth 20 percent	Highest 20 percent
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	124,416	24,927	24,863	24,848	24,836	24,942
Lower limit	n.a.	n.a.	\$19,112	\$36,134	\$59,514	\$96,228
Consumer unit characteristics:						
Income before taxes	\$65,596	\$9,988	\$27,585	\$47,265	\$75,952	\$167,010
Age of reference person	50.0	52.5	51.7	49.3	47.8	48.9
Average number in consumer unit:						
Persons	2.5	1.7	2.2	2.5	2.8	3.1
Children under 18 .....	.6	.4	.5	.6	.7	.8
Persons 65 and older .....	.3	.4	.5	.4	.3	.2
Earners	1.3	.5	.9	1.3	1.7	2.0
Vehicles	1.9	1.0	1.4	1.9	2.4	2.8
Percent homeowner	64	39	54	64	75	89
Average annual expenditures	\$51,442	\$22,154	\$32,632	\$43,004	\$59,980	\$99,368
Food	6,599	3,502	4,524	5,798	7,831	11,334
Food at home	3,921	2,416	2,991	3,633	4,593	5,968
Cereals and bakery products	538	341	407	503	638	800
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	852	553	672	805	974	1,258
Dairy products	419	243	312	377	498	664
Fruits and vegetables	731	440	558	670	831	1,156
Other food at home	1,380	839	1,041	1,279	1,652	2,090
Food away from home	2,678	1,086	1,533	2,164	3,239	5,366
Alcoholic beverages	451	152	260	363	559	922
Housing	16,887	8,836	12,258	14,755	18,863	29,705
Shelter	9,891	5,451	7,055	8,544	10,948	17,442
Owned dwellings	6,056	1,724	3,055	4,542	7,301	13,644
Rented dwellings	3,186	3,527	3,776	3,670	3,056	1,905
Other lodging	649	200	223	331	592	1,893
Utilities, fuels, and public services	3,648	2,177	2,980	3,561	4,192	5,330
Household operations	1,159	380	712	855	1,243	2,602
Housekeeping supplies	610	305	481	525	737	1,001
Household furnishings and equipment	1,580	522	1,031	1,271	1,743	3,330
Apparel and services	1,736	759	1,132	1,313	2,121	3,352
Transportation	8,998	3,447	5,462	8,181	11,549	16,344
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	3,210	993	1,603	2,781	4,479	6,193
Gasoline and motor oil	2,756	1,222	2,013	2,745	3,494	4,305
Other vehicle expenses	2,490	1,051	1,615	2,290	3,033	4,457
Public and other transportation	542	181	231	365	543	1,389
Health care	3,556	1,677	2,787	3,363	4,169	5,785
Entertainment	2,605	989	1,603	2,056	2,930	5,444
Personal care products and services	628	255	407	509	775	1,194
Reading	109	44	69	87	135	212
Education	1,207	628	431	526	1,046	3,399
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	332	301	342	386	356	273
Miscellaneous	829	376	635	736	779	1,617
Cash contributions	1,913	698	1,109	1,310	2,189	4,252
Personal insurance and pensions	5,591	489	1,612	3,623	6,678	15,534
Life and other personal insurance	353	97	139	232	391	903
Pensions and Social Security	5,238	392	1,473	3,391	6,287	14,631

n.a. Not applicable.

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table 2. Income before taxes: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2012

Item	All consumer units	Less than \$5,000	\$5,000 to \$9,999	\$10,000 to \$14,999	\$15,000 to \$19,999	\$20,000 to \$29,999	\$30,000 to \$39,999	\$40,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$69,999	\$70,000 and more
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	124,416	4,906	5,171	8,094	8,006	14,515	13,526	11,010	17,972	41,216
Consumer unit characteristics:										
Income before taxes	\$65,596	- \$2,153	\$8,010	\$12,676	\$17,483	\$24,834	\$34,700	\$44,759	\$59,283	\$133,437
Age of reference person	50.0	45.7	48.1	56.7	55.7	53.5	49.1	49.6	47.8	48.5
Average number in consumer unit:										
Persons	2.5	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.9	2.1	2.4	2.5	2.6	3.0
Children under 18 .....	.6	.4	.5	.3	.5	.5	.6	.6	.6	.8
Persons 65 and older .....	.3	.3	.3	.5	.5	.5	.4	.4	.3	.2
Earners	1.3	.5	.5	.4	.6	.8	1.1	1.3	1.5	1.9
Vehicles	1.9	.9	.8	.9	1.2	1.4	1.6	1.9	2.1	2.7
Percent homeowner	64	34	31	41	48	53	56	64	68	85
Average annual expenditures	\$51,442	\$23,462	\$19,783	\$20,188	\$25,691	\$30,869	\$36,229	\$41,567	\$49,982	\$85,410
Food	6,599	3,747	3,035	3,211	3,959	4,271	4,962	5,698	6,518	10,205
Food at home	3,921	2,322	2,232	2,235	2,762	2,877	3,216	3,621	3,910	5,560
Cereals and bakery products	538	321	315	313	388	400	421	521	549	750
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	852	518	552	527	599	626	752	791	825	1,185
Dairy products	419	208	223	218	300	299	337	374	414	614
Fruits and vegetables	731	426	376	408	514	536	599	655	719	1,055
Other food at home	1,380	849	766	768	961	1,016	1,108	1,281	1,403	1,956
Food away from home	2,678	1,426	803	977	1,197	1,394	1,746	2,077	2,608	4,645
Alcoholic beverages	451	149	148	117	193	219	335	352	420	804
Housing	16,887	9,116	8,240	8,178	10,116	11,728	13,224	14,645	16,278	25,809
Shelter	9,891	5,811	5,249	4,988	6,054	6,686	7,703	8,384	9,551	15,063
Owned dwellings	6,056	2,063	1,218	1,531	2,202	2,815	3,564	4,500	5,585	11,355
Rented dwellings	3,186	3,372	3,873	3,338	3,647	3,651	3,909	3,569	3,541	2,300
Other lodging	649	376	159	119	204	220	230	316	424	1,408
Utilities, fuels, and public services	3,648	1,898	1,947	2,161	2,609	2,894	3,225	3,557	3,823	4,917
Household operations	1,159	355	348	350	465	701	768	899	923	2,112
Housekeeping supplies	610	375	250	268	351	483	490	527	557	930
Household furnishings and equipment	1,580	677	445	411	636	964	1,038	1,278	1,425	2,787
Apparel and services	1,736	928	763	593	947	1,064	1,163	1,398	1,559	2,932
Transportation	8,998	3,917	2,748	2,987	4,128	4,991	6,311	7,531	9,928	14,781
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	3,210	¹ 1,582	774	697	1,100	1,425	1,751	2,197	3,855	5,711
Gasoline and motor oil	2,756	1,161	1,054	1,125	1,558	1,896	2,337	2,651	3,091	4,034
Other vehicle expenses	2,490	912	724	1,030	1,285	1,450	1,941	2,365	2,533	3,968
Public and other transportation	542	262	196	136	185	220	281	318	449	1,068
Health care	3,556	1,363	1,318	1,731	2,196	2,844	2,906	3,244	3,689	5,212
Entertainment	2,605	1,020	802	1,039	1,075	1,481	1,816	1,934	2,438	4,534
Personal care products and services	628	240	233	249	290	412	423	479	606	1,058
Reading	109	40	44	43	50	65	77	87	103	185
Education	1,207	881	963	438	402	319	589	571	647	2,515
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	332	280	339	288	298	336	384	364	374	306
Miscellaneous	829	462	346	305	410	766	557	666	727	1,316
Cash contributions	1,913	1,101	463	550	796	1,104	1,130	1,193	1,819	3,450
Personal insurance and pensions	5,591	218	340	458	830	1,271	2,353	3,407	4,875	12,302
Life and other personal insurance	353	76	78	115	106	133	188	209	266	722
Pensions and Social Security	5,238	142	263	343	724	1,137	2,164	3,198	4,609	11,580

¹ Data are likely to have large sampling errors.

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table 3. Higher income before taxes: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2012

Item	All consumer units	Less than \$70,000	\$70,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 and more	\$100,000 to \$119,999	\$120,000 to \$149,999	\$150,000 and more
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	124,416	83,200	6,946	10,977	23,293	7,183	6,947	9,162
Consumer unit characteristics:								
Income before taxes	\$65,596	\$31,989	\$74,689	\$88,974	\$171,910	\$108,977	\$132,318	\$251,270
Age of reference person	50.0	50.8	47.9	48.1	48.9	48.7	48.5	49.4
Average number in consumer unit:								
Persons	2.5	2.2	2.8	2.9	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.2
Children under 18 .....	.6	.5	.7	.7	.8	.8	.8	.9
Persons 65 and older .....	.3	.4	.3	.3	.2	.2	.2	.2
Earners	1.3	1.0	1.7	1.8	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.0
Vehicles	1.9	1.5	2.4	2.5	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8
Percent homeowner	64	54	75	80	90	87	89	92
Average annual expenditures	\$51,442	\$34,679	\$59,984	\$67,418	\$101,423	\$77,966	\$89,521	\$129,211
Food	6,599	4,842	8,250	8,612	11,527	9,599	11,287	13,375
Food at home	3,921	3,124	4,945	4,865	6,060	5,279	6,003	6,790
Cereals and bakery products	538	435	669	664	814	720	797	909
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	852	691	1,074	1,086	1,264	1,127	1,204	1,430
Dairy products	419	324	541	533	673	581	654	767
Fruits and vegetables	731	574	878	906	1,176	985	1,172	1,347
Other food at home	1,380	1,100	1,783	1,676	2,134	1,867	2,175	2,336
Food away from home	2,678	1,718	3,306	3,747	5,467	4,320	5,284	6,585
Alcoholic beverages	451	279	583	659	937	737	899	1,140
Housing	16,887	12,476	18,456	21,039	30,243	23,410	27,330	37,877
Shelter	9,891	7,328	10,437	12,293	17,748	13,796	15,837	22,296
Owned dwellings	6,056	3,431	6,721	8,888	13,898	10,653	12,588	17,436
Rented dwellings	3,186	3,625	3,065	2,708	1,881	2,072	1,752	1,828
Other lodging	649	272	650	697	1,969	1,070	1,498	3,032
Utilities, fuels, and public services	3,648	3,020	4,149	4,432	5,374	4,795	5,158	5,992
Household operations	1,159	687	1,194	1,454	2,696	1,732	2,297	3,757
Housekeeping supplies	610	454	841	787	1,021	836	988	1,208
Household furnishings and equipment	1,580	986	1,835	2,073	3,404	2,252	3,050	4,624
Apparel and services	1,736	1,152	2,209	2,394	3,399	2,509	3,184	4,315
Transportation	8,998	6,139	11,590	12,953	16,578	14,841	14,907	19,217
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	3,210	1,972	4,267	5,283	6,343	6,126	5,146	7,421
Gasoline and motor oil	2,756	2,123	3,432	3,827	4,311	4,143	4,363	4,404
Other vehicle expenses	2,490	1,763	3,381	3,203	4,487	3,775	4,232	5,248
Public and other transportation	542	282	510	640	1,437	797	1,167	2,144
Health care	3,556	2,737	4,167	4,535	5,843	5,277	5,448	6,593
Entertainment	2,605	1,655	3,112	3,202	5,578	3,934	4,874	7,456
Personal care products and services	628	417	898	822	1,213	1,049	1,110	1,422
Reading	109	72	141	148	216	162	204	267
Education	1,207	560	1,045	1,230	3,559	1,917	2,462	5,681
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	332	344	384	357	259	311	250	225
Miscellaneous	829	588	794	946	1,648	1,313	1,392	2,108
Cash contributions	1,913	1,151	1,878	2,381	4,422	2,683	3,196	6,716
Personal insurance and pensions	5,591	2,266	6,477	8,139	16,000	10,223	12,980	22,820
Life and other personal insurance	353	170	368	487	938	532	660	1,469
Pensions and Social Security	5,238	2,097	6,109	7,652	15,062	9,691	12,320	21,351

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table 4. Age of reference person: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2012

Item	All consumer units	Under 25 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65 years and older	65-74 years	75 years and older
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	124,416	8,159	20,112	21,598	24,624	22,770	27,154	14,993	12,161
Consumer unit characteristics:									
Income before taxes	\$65,596	\$36,639	\$58,832	\$78,169	\$81,704	\$77,507	\$44,713	\$53,521	\$33,853
Age of reference person	50.0	21.7	29.6	39.4	49.6	59.1	74.8	68.9	82.1
Average number in consumer unit:									
Persons	2.5	2.0	2.8	3.4	2.7	2.1	1.7	1.8	1.5
Children under 18 .....	.6	.4	1.1	1.4	.6	.2	.1	.1	(¹)
Persons 65 and older .....	.3	(¹)	(¹)	(¹)	.1	.1	1.4	1.4	1.3
Earners	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.3	.5	.6	.2
Vehicles	1.9	1.2	1.7	2.0	2.3	2.2	1.6	1.9	1.3
Percent homeowner	64	15	40	62	72	79	80	80	79
Average annual expenditures	\$51,442	\$31,411	\$49,544	\$58,069	\$62,103	\$55,636	\$40,410	\$45,968	\$33,530
Food	6,599	4,412	6,513	7,701	7,917	6,800	5,059	5,793	4,141
Food at home	3,921	2,529	3,680	4,490	4,707	4,012	3,273	3,719	2,716
Cereals and bakery products	538	355	512	632	633	527	459	490	421
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	852	573	755	999	1,047	887	686	804	539
Dairy products	419	251	394	497	498	433	342	385	289
Fruits and vegetables	731	456	683	808	872	733	659	723	580
Other food at home	1,380	894	1,335	1,555	1,657	1,432	1,127	1,318	887
Food away from home	2,678	1,883	2,833	3,210	3,210	2,788	1,785	2,074	1,426
Alcoholic beverages	451	354	564	501	454	493	315	407	201
Housing	16,887	10,957	17,157	19,858	19,076	17,247	13,833	15,076	12,298
Shelter	9,891	7,285	10,458	11,849	11,244	9,728	7,605	8,372	6,659
Owned dwellings	6,056	1,307	4,552	7,676	7,625	6,991	5,101	5,970	4,030
Rented dwellings	3,186	5,748	5,603	3,691	2,712	1,788	1,828	1,557	2,162
Other lodging	649	230	304	483	907	949	676	845	467
Utilities, fuels, and public services	3,648	1,879	3,130	4,077	4,304	3,992	3,340	3,595	3,025
Household operations	1,159	538	1,338	1,559	1,080	1,029	1,076	1,004	1,164
Housekeeping supplies	610	303	538	618	668	736	597	670	507
Household furnishings and equipment	1,580	952	1,693	1,755	1,780	1,763	1,215	1,436	942
Apparel and services	1,736	1,246	2,061	2,264	2,041	1,622	1,022	1,287	691
Transportation	8,998	6,410	9,724	9,991	10,644	9,519	6,538	8,214	4,468
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	3,210	2,867	4,175	3,610	3,537	2,895	2,250	2,993	1,333
Gasoline and motor oil	2,756	1,931	2,822	3,342	3,421	2,887	1,775	2,222	1,224
Other vehicle expenses	2,490	1,322	2,238	2,532	3,046	3,046	2,041	2,414	1,579
Public and other transportation	542	291	489	506	640	691	472	585	332
Health care	3,556	1,024	2,047	2,948	3,687	4,377	5,118	5,259	4,944
Entertainment	2,605	1,257	2,382	3,232	3,051	2,911	2,020	2,413	1,532
Personal care products and services	628	360	574	694	707	696	569	652	465
Reading	109	44	72	93	118	133	142	148	136
Education	1,207	1,886	1,021	1,050	2,426	1,118	236	245	223
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	332	262	351	358	431	372	193	249	124
Miscellaneous	829	372	660	876	924	908	902	1,031	743
Cash contributions	1,913	488	1,104	1,469	2,430	2,353	2,454	2,289	2,658
Personal insurance and pensions	5,591	2,339	5,313	7,033	8,196	7,088	2,009	2,904	906
Life and other personal insurance	353	50	144	325	446	517	397	484	290
Pensions and Social Security	5,238	2,289	5,169	6,709	7,749	6,571	1,612	2,420	616

¹ Value is less than or equal to 0.05.

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table 5. Size of consumer unit: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2012

Item	All consumer units	One person	Two or more persons				
			Total	Two persons	Three persons	Four persons	Five or more persons
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	124,416	36,942	87,474	39,676	18,980	16,852	11,966
Consumer unit characteristics:							
Income before taxes	\$65,596	\$34,102	\$78,897	\$72,885	\$79,557	\$90,184	\$81,887
Age of reference person	50.0	54.3	48.2	54.3	45.6	41.7	41.5
Average number in consumer unit:							
Persons	2.5	1.0	3.1	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.7
Children under 18 .....	.6	n.a.	.9	.1	.7	1.6	2.8
Persons 65 and older .....	.3	.3	.3	.6	.2	.1	.1
Earners	1.3	.6	1.6	1.2	1.7	1.9	2.1
Vehicles	1.9	1.0	2.3	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.4
Percent homeowner	64	50	70	73	67	70	66
Average annual expenditures	\$51,442	\$30,716	\$60,097	\$55,068	\$60,943	\$67,622	\$64,963
Food	6,599	3,497	7,857	6,836	7,671	9,225	9,725
Food at home	3,921	1,964	4,712	3,932	4,612	5,563	6,351
Cereals and bakery products	538	270	646	512	628	781	943
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	852	392	1,038	862	1,029	1,189	1,447
Dairy products	419	207	505	414	488	616	685
Fruits and vegetables	731	384	871	742	844	1,043	1,116
Other food at home	1,380	711	1,651	1,400	1,624	1,934	2,160
Food away from home	2,678	1,533	3,145	2,904	3,058	3,662	3,374
Alcoholic beverages	451	344	495	606	430	426	315
Housing	16,887	11,532	19,138	17,158	19,781	21,548	21,280
Shelter	9,891	7,437	10,926	9,786	11,468	12,240	12,001
Owned dwellings	6,056	3,412	7,172	6,268	7,297	8,608	7,951
Rented dwellings	3,186	3,715	2,963	2,619	3,360	2,906	3,553
Other lodging	649	311	791	898	811	726	497
Utilities, fuels, and public services	3,648	2,291	4,221	3,736	4,304	4,683	5,049
Household operations	1,159	640	1,378	1,052	1,569	1,943	1,360
Housekeeping supplies	610	316	729	688	703	773	845
Household furnishings and equipment	1,580	848	1,883	1,896	1,737	1,908	2,024
Apparel and services	1,736	865	2,090	1,690	2,083	2,631	2,702
Transportation	8,998	4,599	10,848	10,055	10,803	12,001	11,914
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	3,210	1,377	3,985	3,787	3,766	4,360	4,459
Gasoline and motor oil	2,756	1,420	3,320	2,808	3,432	3,833	4,115
Other vehicle expenses	2,490	1,472	2,911	2,804	3,016	3,073	2,865
Public and other transportation	542	330	632	655	588	735	476
Health care	3,556	2,339	4,069	4,399	3,845	3,730	3,810
Entertainment	2,605	1,485	3,071	2,829	2,939	3,667	3,249
Personal care products and services	628	380	730	712	681	807	765
Reading	109	83	121	139	109	108	95
Education	1,207	675	1,432	917	1,954	2,124	1,339
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	332	251	366	339	401	338	439
Miscellaneous	829	647	906	917	938	950	756
Cash contributions	1,913	1,484	2,094	2,459	2,073	1,631	1,567
Personal insurance and pensions	5,591	2,535	6,881	6,015	7,235	8,433	7,008
Life and other personal insurance	353	154	437	468	416	435	366
Pensions and Social Security	5,238	2,382	6,445	5,546	6,818	7,998	6,642

n.a. Not applicable.

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table 6. Composition of consumer unit: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2012

Item	Husband and wife consumer units							One parent, at least one child under 18	Single person and other consumer units
	Total	Husband and wife only	Husband and wife with children				Other husband and wife consumer units		
			Total	Oldest child under 6	Oldest child 6 to 17	Oldest child 18 or older			
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	60,428	25,936	29,252	5,676	14,797	8,778	5,241	6,524	57,463
Consumer unit characteristics:									
Income before taxes	\$90,393	\$81,717	\$98,104	\$85,200	\$100,698	\$102,074	\$90,293	\$34,194	\$43,086
Age of reference person	50.1	58.4	42.8	32.7	40.9	52.7	49.9	38.0	51.3
Average number in consumer unit:									
Persons	3.2	2.0	3.9	3.5	4.2	3.9	4.9	2.9	1.7
Children under 18 .....	.9	n.a.	1.6	1.5	2.2	.6	1.4	1.7	.2
Persons 65 and older .....	.4	.7	.1	(¹)	(¹)	.2	.6	(¹)	.3
Earners	1.6	1.2	1.9	1.7	1.8	2.4	2.3	1.0	.9
Vehicles	2.5	2.4	2.6	2.0	2.5	3.1	2.9	1.2	1.3
Percent homeowner	80	85	76	64	76	86	74	36	51
Average annual expenditures	\$67,310	\$61,285	\$72,814	\$64,103	\$74,659	\$75,286	\$67,187	\$38,667	\$36,152
Food	8,615	7,463	9,611	7,331	10,458	9,626	9,431	5,895	4,528
Food at home	5,089	4,263	5,742	4,452	6,095	5,958	6,041	3,673	2,699
Cereals and bakery products	698	559	803	623	878	789	890	515	369
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	1,095	922	1,213	830	1,302	1,304	1,411	802	598
Dairy products	561	448	656	570	693	647	652	353	275
Fruits and vegetables	953	825	1,060	858	1,100	1,118	1,073	676	499
Other food at home	1,781	1,509	2,011	1,571	2,122	2,099	2,016	1,327	957
Food away from home	3,526	3,200	3,869	2,879	4,363	3,668	3,390	2,222	1,829
Alcoholic beverages	553	670	475	503	502	411	351	175	377
Housing	20,771	18,258	22,980	23,621	23,432	21,803	20,803	14,593	13,061
Shelter	11,739	10,213	13,149	13,106	13,616	12,389	11,417	8,586	8,095
Owned dwellings	8,493	7,284	9,641	8,851	10,036	9,486	8,066	3,505	3,782
Rented dwellings	2,220	1,712	2,568	3,751	2,619	1,717	2,797	4,872	4,010
Other lodging	1,025	1,217	940	504	961	1,186	554	209	302
Utilities, fuels, and public services	4,487	3,997	4,752	3,867	4,797	5,250	5,430	3,298	2,806
Household operations	1,562	1,106	2,004	3,891	1,785	1,151	1,354	1,244	725
Housekeeping supplies	815	772	856	713	925	829	820	477	407
Household furnishings and equipment	2,169	2,170	2,220	2,044	2,309	2,183	1,782	989	1,027
Apparel and services	2,235	1,760	2,685	2,450	2,870	2,523	2,250	2,113	1,154
Transportation	12,163	11,254	12,786	10,925	12,522	14,424	13,174	6,353	5,968
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	4,594	4,355	4,732	4,357	4,523	5,328	5,003	2,104	1,881
Gasoline and motor oil	3,599	3,023	3,999	3,283	4,038	4,397	4,212	2,231	1,929
Other vehicle expenses	3,214	3,058	3,322	2,710	3,205	3,903	3,372	1,767	1,808
Public and other transportation	757	818	733	575	756	796	587	251	350
Health care	4,828	5,407	4,310	3,381	4,167	5,150	4,854	1,704	2,430
Entertainment	3,554	3,228	3,948	3,023	4,530	3,563	3,013	1,846	1,689
Personal care products and services	804	781	835	678	908	812	769	518	454
Reading	145	172	126	96	125	148	117	50	79
Education	1,706	985	2,417	793	2,240	3,767	1,313	846	724
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	314	282	317	236	299	401	457	248	360
Miscellaneous	954	987	950	936	956	948	814	946	683
Cash contributions	2,550	3,117	2,078	1,705	1,955	2,528	2,375	720	1,378
Personal insurance and pensions	8,117	6,919	9,295	8,426	9,695	9,184	7,467	2,660	3,268
Life and other personal insurance	554	627	505	460	501	540	470	142	164
Pensions and Social Security	7,562	6,291	8,790	7,966	9,194	8,643	6,996	2,518	3,103

¹ Value is less than or equal to 0.05.
n.a. Not applicable.

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table 7. Number of earners in consumer unit: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2012

Item	All consumer units	Single consumers		Consumer units of two or more persons			
		No earner	One earner	No earner	One earner	Two earners	Three or more earners
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	124,416	15,943	20,999	11,753	26,075	39,702	9,944
Consumer unit characteristics:							
Income before taxes	\$65,596	\$19,704	\$45,033	\$33,243	\$63,836	\$94,352	\$110,647
Age of reference person	50.0	67.6	44.1	64.6	47.8	43.9	47.1
Average number in consumer unit:							
Persons	2.5	1.0	1.0	2.4	3.0	3.1	4.4
Children under 18 .....	.6	n.a.	n.a.	.4	1.0	.9	1.0
Persons 65 and older .....	.3	.7	.1	1.2	.3	.1	.1
Earners	1.3	n.a.	1.0	n.a.	1.0	2.0	3.3
Vehicles	1.9	.9	1.2	1.7	1.9	2.4	3.3
Percent homeowner	64	57	45	74	63	72	79
Average annual expenditures	\$51,442	\$23,641	\$36,030	\$39,119	\$52,654	\$67,596	\$75,840
Food	6,599	2,953	3,890	5,757	7,142	8,512	10,372
Food at home	3,921	1,961	1,966	3,909	4,405	4,885	6,220
Cereals and bakery products	538	272	269	555	605	664	851
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	852	406	383	866	980	1,056	1,434
Dairy products	419	203	210	396	473	532	653
Fruits and vegetables	731	385	383	740	812	897	1,166
Other food at home	1,380	696	722	1,351	1,536	1,737	2,116
Food away from home	2,678	991	1,923	1,848	2,737	3,627	4,152
Alcoholic beverages	451	125	500	312	408	607	537
Housing	16,887	9,845	12,807	13,522	17,845	21,047	21,641
Shelter	9,891	6,069	8,476	6,896	10,352	12,148	12,322
Owned dwellings	6,056	2,916	3,788	4,335	6,292	8,206	8,706
Rented dwellings	3,186	2,924	4,315	2,003	3,377	3,056	2,640
Other lodging	649	229	373	558	683	885	976
Utilities, fuels, and public services	3,648	2,247	2,324	3,561	3,973	4,313	5,288
Household operations	1,159	655	628	985	1,190	1,682	1,124
Housekeeping supplies	610	314	317	701	690	748	818
Household furnishings and equipment	1,580	559	1,061	1,381	1,640	2,157	2,091
Apparel and services	1,736	548	1,094	1,192	1,961	2,330	2,718
Transportation	8,998	3,009	5,806	6,199	9,227	12,260	15,113
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	3,210	702	1,889	2,078	3,318	4,566	5,668
Gasoline and motor oil	2,756	905	1,811	1,930	2,807	3,690	4,830
Other vehicle expenses	2,490	1,157	1,711	1,863	2,520	3,270	3,905
Public and other transportation	542	245	395	328	582	735	709
Health care	3,556	2,829	1,968	4,984	3,787	3,881	4,499
Entertainment	2,605	1,182	1,711	1,932	2,750	3,556	3,360
Personal care products and services	628	304	435	501	660	811	907
Reading	109	78	86	126	108	123	136
Education	1,207	441	852	268	1,129	1,651	2,734
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	332	224	272	325	363	357	455
Miscellaneous	829	515	745	988	843	915	930
Cash contributions	1,913	1,400	1,547	2,424	1,736	2,202	2,206
Personal insurance and pensions	5,591	188	4,318	588	4,695	9,342	10,229
Life and other personal insurance	353	145	160	318	355	504	521
Pensions and Social Security	5,238	142	4,158	1,271	4,339	8,838	9,707

¹ Data are likely to have large sampling errors.
n.a. Not applicable.

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table 8. Housing tenure and type of area: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2012

Item	All consumer units	Housing tenure				Type of area			
		Homeowner			Renter	Urban			Rural
		Total	Home- owner with mortgage	Home- owner without mortgage		Total	Central City	Other Urban	
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	124,416	79,945	47,946	31,999	44,471	114,117	36,929	77,188	10,299
Consumer unit characteristics:									
Income before taxes	\$65,596	\$80,330	\$93,941	\$59,937	\$39,109	\$66,877	\$56,338	\$71,919	\$51,405
Age of reference person	50.0	54.5	48.5	63.6	42.0	49.7	47.3	50.8	54.1
Average number in consumer unit:									
Persons	2.5	2.6	2.9	2.1	2.3	2.5	2.3	2.6	2.4
Children under 18 .....	.6	.6	.8	.3	.7	.6	.6	.6	.6
Persons 65 and older .....	.3	.4	.2	.8	.2	.3	.3	.4	.4
Earners	1.3	1.4	1.7	.9	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.2
Vehicles	1.9	2.3	2.4	2.1	1.2	1.8	1.4	2.1	2.5
Percent homeowner	64	100	100	100	n.a.	63	47	70	82
Average annual expenditures	\$51,442	\$59,983	\$68,228	\$47,255	\$36,076	\$52,227	\$45,115	\$55,577	\$42,699
Food	6,599	7,465	7,920	6,565	5,037	6,652	5,929	6,975	5,981
Food at home	3,921	4,357	4,579	3,899	3,134	3,929	3,496	4,119	3,827
Cereals and bakery products	538	599	631	531	428	540	474	569	515
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	852	937	994	819	700	850	773	884	883
Dairy products	419	473	499	419	322	420	365	444	409
Fruits and vegetables	731	809	845	733	591	739	675	766	642
Other food at home	1,380	1,539	1,610	1,396	1,094	1,381	1,210	1,456	1,378
Food away from home	2,678	3,108	3,341	2,666	1,903	2,723	2,433	2,856	2,154
Alcoholic beverages	451	513	563	417	339	465	477	460	290
Housing	16,887	18,756	22,705	12,849	13,526	17,364	15,861	18,070	11,604
Shelter	9,891	10,307	13,590	5,387	9,142	10,289	9,882	10,484	5,470
Owned dwellings	6,056	9,349	12,591	4,492	135	6,237	4,562	7,038	4,048
Rented dwellings	3,186	57	50	67	8,812	3,389	4,828	2,701	935
Other lodging	649	901	949	828	195	663	492	745	487
Utilities, fuels, and public services	3,648	4,338	4,648	3,874	2,408	3,655	3,184	3,880	3,577
Household operations	1,159	1,439	1,638	1,139	655	1,201	1,013	1,291	693
Housekeeping supplies	610	725	734	705	403	610	480	667	612
Household furnishings and equipment	1,580	1,947	2,094	1,744	918	1,609	1,302	1,749	1,252
Apparel and services	1,736	1,877	2,125	1,411	1,481	1,764	1,770	1,761	1,419
Transportation	8,998	10,658	12,110	8,468	6,013	9,011	6,949	9,991	8,862
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	3,210	3,863	4,569	2,805	2,038	3,218	2,166	3,721	3,128
Gasoline and motor oil	2,756	3,188	3,584	2,593	1,979	2,717	2,099	3,012	3,189
Other vehicle expenses	2,490	2,962	3,286	2,463	1,638	2,505	2,086	2,699	2,323
Public and other transportation	542	645	671	607	357	571	598	559	222
Health care	3,556	4,541	4,311	4,896	1,786	3,518	2,759	3,881	3,980
Entertainment	2,605	3,196	3,536	2,657	1,541	2,635	2,119	2,874	2,278
Personal care products and services	628	733	805	605	440	643	585	670	460
Reading	109	139	135	145	56	110	98	116	98
Education	1,207	1,383	1,756	818	891	1,270	1,087	1,358	507
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	332	307	324	281	377	317	296	327	494
Miscellaneous	829	1,022	1,025	1,032	482	850	725	909	591
Cash contributions	1,913	2,385	2,182	2,690	1,063	1,927	1,834	1,971	1,753
Personal insurance and pensions	5,591	7,007	8,733	4,421	3,045	5,700	4,627	6,213	4,381
Life and other personal insurance	353	478	539	386	127	361	257	410	264
Pensions and Social Security	5,238	6,529	8,194	4,035	2,917	5,339	4,370	5,803	4,117

n.a. Not applicable.

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table 9. Race of reference person: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2012

Item	All consumer units	White and all other races, and Asian			Black or African-American
		Total	White and all other races ¹	Asian	
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	124,416	108,778	103,386	5,393	15,637
Consumer unit characteristics:					
Income before taxes	\$65,596	\$68,253	\$67,319	\$86,156	\$47,119
Age of reference person	50.0	50.4	50.7	44.1	47.7
Average number in consumer unit:					
Persons	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.8	2.5
Children under 18 .....	.6	.6	.6	.7	.8
Persons 65 and older .....	.3	.4	.4	.3	.2
Earners	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.1
Vehicles	1.9	2.0	2.0	1.6	1.3
Percent homeowner	64	67	68	54	43
Average annual expenditures	\$51,442	\$53,290	\$52,870	\$61,399	\$38,627
Food	6,599	6,875	6,822	7,980	4,701
Food at home	3,921	4,059	4,044	4,367	2,973
Cereals and bakery products	538	557	556	584	404
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	852	855	846	1,034	836
Dairy products	419	443	446	372	254
Fruits and vegetables	731	760	747	1,037	530
Other food at home	1,380	1,443	1,448	1,339	949
Food away from home	2,678	2,816	2,777	3,613	1,728
Alcoholic beverages	451	486	492	360	212
Housing	16,887	17,246	17,058	20,821	14,395
Shelter	9,891	10,099	9,904	13,841	8,441
Owned dwellings	6,056	6,402	6,299	8,380	3,645
Rented dwellings	3,186	2,994	2,902	4,770	4,521
Other lodging	649	702	703	691	275
Utilities, fuels, and public services	3,648	3,666	3,677	3,456	3,525
Household operations	1,159	1,209	1,195	1,469	810
Housekeeping supplies	610	632	638	497	459
Household furnishings and equipment	1,580	1,641	1,643	1,558	1,160
Apparel and services	1,736	1,741	1,710	2,391	1,697
Transportation	8,998	9,322	9,280	10,117	6,751
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	3,210	3,362	3,363	3,339	2,155
Gasoline and motor oil	2,756	2,817	2,825	2,659	2,329
Other vehicle expenses	2,490	2,571	2,566	2,658	1,927
Public and other transportation	542	571	525	1,461	340
Health care	3,556	3,779	3,804	3,285	2,013
Entertainment	2,605	2,761	2,784	2,303	1,526
Personal care products and services	628	637	640	594	565
Reading	109	119	120	97	45
Education	1,207	1,289	1,184	3,295	641
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	332	344	354	161	245
Miscellaneous	829	867	868	849	563
Cash contributions	1,913	1,992	2,025	1,356	1,358
Personal insurance and pensions	5,591	5,832	5,730	7,789	3,914
Life and other personal insurance	353	357	357	361	321
Pensions and Social Security	5,238	5,475	5,373	7,428	3,593

¹ All other races includes Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, and approximately 1 percent reporting more than one race.

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table 10. Hispanic or Latino origin of reference person: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2012

Item	All consumer units	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino		
			Total	White and all other races	Black or African- American
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	124,416	15,597	108,819	93,385	15,434
Consumer unit characteristics:					
Income before taxes	\$65,596	\$48,066	\$68,109	\$71,552	\$47,277
Age of reference person	50.0	42.8	51.1	51.6	47.7
Average number in consumer unit:					
Persons	2.5	3.3	2.4	2.3	2.5
Children under 18 .....	.6	1.1	.5	.5	.8
Persons 65 and older .....	.3	.2	.4	.4	.2
Earners	1.3	1.6	1.2	1.3	1.1
Vehicles	1.9	1.6	1.9	2.0	1.3
Percent homeowner	64	46	67	71	43
Average annual expenditures	\$51,442	\$42,268	\$52,757	\$55,097	\$38,634
Food	6,599	6,570	6,603	6,924	4,678
Food at home	3,921	4,116	3,893	4,050	2,954
Cereals and bakery products	538	534	538	561	402
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	852	1,037	826	825	835
Dairy products	419	427	418	446	251
Fruits and vegetables	731	820	718	750	528
Other food at home	1,380	1,298	1,392	1,468	938
Food away from home	2,678	2,454	2,710	2,875	1,724
Alcoholic beverages	451	338	467	510	212
Housing	16,887	15,061	17,149	17,605	14,393
Shelter	9,891	9,215	9,987	10,244	8,432
Owned dwellings	6,056	4,185	6,324	6,763	3,664
Rented dwellings	3,186	4,843	2,949	2,694	4,491
Other lodging	649	187	715	787	278
Utilities, fuels, and public services	3,648	3,325	3,695	3,721	3,535
Household operations	1,159	728	1,221	1,288	815
Housekeeping supplies	610	568	616	642	462
Household furnishings and equipment	1,580	1,225	1,631	1,711	1,149
Apparel and services	1,736	2,030	1,694	1,694	1,695
Transportation	8,998	8,306	9,097	9,485	6,755
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	3,210	2,890	3,256	3,439	2,154
Gasoline and motor oil	2,756	2,727	2,760	2,831	2,328
Other vehicle expenses	2,490	2,294	2,518	2,615	1,934
Public and other transportation	542	395	563	600	339
Health care	3,556	1,893	3,795	4,088	2,024
Entertainment	2,605	1,588	2,751	2,953	1,531
Personal care products and services	628	556	639	651	565
Reading	109	40	119	132	45
Education	1,207	488	1,310	1,423	631
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	332	157	357	375	246
Miscellaneous	829	553	868	919	561
Cash contributions	1,913	782	2,075	2,192	1,364
Personal insurance and pensions	5,591	3,905	5,833	6,146	3,934
Life and other personal insurance	353	112	387	398	324
Pensions and Social Security	5,238	3,793	5,446	5,749	3,610

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table 11. Region of residence: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2012

Item	All consumer units	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	124,416	22,459	27,584	46,338	28,035
Consumer unit characteristics:					
Income before taxes	\$65,596	\$72,036	\$65,217	\$60,219	\$69,700
Age of reference person	50.0	50.9	49.6	50.3	49.3
Average number in consumer unit:					
Persons	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.6
Children under 18 .....	.6	.6	.6	.6	.6
Persons 65 and older .....	.3	.4	.3	.3	.3
Earners	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.4
Vehicles	1.9	1.6	2.0	1.9	2.0
Percent homeowner	64	62	68	66	59
Average annual expenditures	\$51,442	\$55,884	\$48,602	\$47,757	\$56,782
Food	6,599	6,962	6,393	6,156	7,246
Food at home	3,921	4,056	3,906	3,652	4,272
Cereals and bakery products	538	586	556	488	564
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	852	898	797	839	893
Dairy products	419	448	421	383	452
Fruits and vegetables	731	798	728	637	836
Other food at home	1,380	1,327	1,405	1,304	1,526
Food away from home	2,678	2,906	2,486	2,504	2,974
Alcoholic beverages	451	535	437	375	524
Housing	16,887	19,745	15,012	15,280	19,103
Shelter	9,891	12,274	8,530	8,298	11,953
Owned dwellings	6,056	7,480	5,644	5,147	6,823
Rented dwellings	3,186	3,938	2,282	2,617	4,416
Other lodging	649	856	604	534	715
Utilities, fuels, and public services	3,648	3,979	3,455	3,704	3,481
Household operations	1,159	1,435	973	1,030	1,333
Housekeeping supplies	610	597	588	609	644
Household furnishings and equipment	1,580	1,460	1,466	1,640	1,691
Apparel and services	1,736	1,833	1,564	1,662	1,950
Transportation	8,998	8,857	8,604	9,080	9,367
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	3,210	2,906	3,216	3,413	3,115
Gasoline and motor oil	2,756	2,503	2,713	2,863	2,824
Other vehicle expenses	2,490	2,612	2,242	2,434	2,730
Public and other transportation	542	836	432	371	698
Health care	3,556	3,572	3,844	3,234	3,795
Entertainment	2,605	2,723	2,550	2,407	2,894
Personal care products and services	628	635	572	628	680
Reading	109	134	107	82	137
Education	1,207	1,789	1,180	851	1,358
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	332	354	341	364	250
Miscellaneous	829	938	808	665	1,033
Cash contributions	1,913	1,798	1,851	1,699	2,417
Personal insurance and pensions	5,591	6,009	5,339	5,273	6,030
Life and other personal insurance	353	332	334	393	320
Pensions and Social Security	5,238	5,677	5,005	4,879	5,710

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table 12. Occupation of reference person: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2012

Item	Self-employed workers	Wage and salary earners						Retired	All other, including not reporting
		Total wage and salary earners	Managers and professionals	Technical, sales and clerical workers	Service workers	Construction workers and mechanics	Operators, fabricators and laborers		
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	6,058	76,929	31,412	19,690	13,335	4,097	8,396	22,812	18,617
Consumer unit characteristics:									
Income before taxes	\$86,024	\$78,173	\$107,270	\$63,123	\$52,945	\$60,792	\$53,151	\$38,015	\$40,778
Age of reference person	49.6	43.9	45.1	43.2	42.6	42.6	43.9	74.0	46.0
Average number in consumer unit:									
Persons	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.7	2.8	2.7	1.7	2.8
Children under 18 .....	.6	.7	.7	.6	.8	.8	.8	.1	.9
Persons 65 and older .....	.2	.1	.1	.1	.1	.1	.1	1.2	.2
Earners	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.7	.2	.6
Vehicles	2.1	2.0	2.2	1.9	1.8	2.4	2.0	1.6	1.5
Percent homeowner	71	63	73	58	49	64	57	80	49
Average annual expenditures	\$61,645	\$57,431	\$73,079	\$49,627	\$44,275	\$50,035	\$41,511	\$38,699	\$39,195
Food	7,412	7,209	8,695	6,610	5,790	6,847	5,399	5,084	5,744
Food at home	4,447	4,079	4,631	3,799	3,572	4,179	3,413	3,292	3,885
Cereals and bakery products	558	560	633	523	512	589	438	451	548
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	995	877	934	820	809	1,025	832	698	895
Dairy products	471	439	512	413	366	419	342	341	418
Fruits and vegetables	896	757	884	678	673	749	616	646	680
Other food at home	1,525	1,446	1,668	1,365	1,213	1,398	1,184	1,156	1,344
Food away from home	2,966	3,129	4,064	2,811	2,218	2,668	1,986	1,792	1,859
Alcoholic beverages	645	528	679	484	361	402	371	325	242
Housing	18,696	18,402	22,990	16,153	14,854	15,620	13,504	13,534	14,174
Shelter	11,084	10,936	13,747	9,599	8,980	8,484	7,857	7,352	8,292
Owned dwellings	7,350	6,735	9,380	5,358	4,431	5,321	4,417	4,913	4,228
Rented dwellings	2,808	3,494	3,170	3,792	4,223	2,885	3,144	1,835	3,695
Other lodging	926	707	1,197	449	327	278	296	605	370
Utilities, fuels, and public services	3,781	3,802	4,234	3,632	3,381	3,658	3,322	3,317	3,377
Household operations	1,194	1,287	1,914	963	809	763	715	1,012	800
Housekeeping supplies	708	616	744	539	491	563	526	630	536
Household furnishings and equipment	1,930	1,762	2,351	1,420	1,193	2,151	1,085	1,223	1,169
Apparel and services	2,050	1,995	2,457	1,872	1,371	1,999	1,462	1,006	1,482
Transportation	9,540	10,470	12,010	9,660	9,221	10,524	8,593	6,082	6,340
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	2,848	3,894	4,346	3,751	3,599	3,637	3,129	1,942	2,059
Gasoline and motor oil	3,076	3,166	3,416	2,937	2,793	3,838	3,035	1,731	2,210
Other vehicle expenses	3,051	2,789	3,264	2,550	2,449	2,741	2,158	1,977	1,727
Public and other transportation	565	621	983	422	381	308	270	431	344
Health care	4,084	3,280	4,169	2,889	2,464	2,811	2,393	5,029	2,726
Entertainment	3,796	2,871	3,852	2,408	1,992	2,689	1,749	1,960	1,935
Personal care products and services	821	685	882	607	541	562	424	541	446
Reading	122	110	161	86	75	76	46	136	71
Education	1,304	1,478	2,284	1,017	970	669	739	214	1,277
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	341	339	234	371	368	589	489	199	460
Miscellaneous	1,071	858	1,172	694	606	757	519	958	474
Cash contributions	2,108	1,916	2,949	1,230	1,216	1,163	1,139	2,467	1,155
Personal insurance and pensions	9,656	7,291	10,545	5,546	4,446	5,326	4,683	1,166	2,667
Life and other personal insurance	627	370	536	271	218	209	304	316	235
Pensions and Social Security	9,029	6,920	10,009	5,275	4,228	5,118	4,379	849	2,432

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES IN 2012

Table 13. Highest education level of any member: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2012

Item	All consumer units	Less than college graduate					College graduate		
		Total	Less than high school graduate	High school graduate	High school graduate with some college	Associate's degree	Total	Bachelor's degree	Master's, professional, doctoral degree
Number of consumer units (in thousands)	124,416	76,789	10,571	26,601	25,793	13,825	47,626	28,069	19,557
Consumer unit characteristics:									
Income before taxes	\$65,596	\$44,603	\$25,159	\$39,357	\$48,224	\$62,809	\$99,444	\$85,802	\$119,023
Age of reference person	50.0	50.7	56.2	53.0	47.5	48.3	48.9	47.4	51.1
Average number in consumer unit:									
Persons	2.5	2.4	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.7
Children under 18 .....	.6	.6	.7	.6	.6	.7	.6	.6	.6
Persons 65 and older .....	.3	.4	.5	.4	.3	.3	.3	.3	.4
Earners	1.3	1.2	.7	1.0	1.2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Vehicles	1.9	1.7	1.1	1.7	1.8	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.2
Percent homeowner	64	58	47	59	56	68	74	71	79
Average annual expenditures	\$51,442	\$39,107	\$24,582	\$34,786	\$43,041	\$50,836	\$71,151	\$63,135	\$82,606
Food	6,599	5,409	3,913	4,944	5,749	6,658	8,435	7,928	9,143
Food at home	3,921	3,442	2,862	3,263	3,542	3,980	4,654	4,379	5,032
Cereals and bakery products	538	473	383	453	481	554	637	592	700
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	852	802	672	812	772	926	930	911	957
Dairy products	419	349	288	322	363	414	526	488	577
Fruits and vegetables	731	608	550	567	626	687	919	848	1,017
Other food at home	1,380	1,211	969	1,109	1,299	1,399	1,641	1,541	1,781
Food away from home	2,678	1,967	1,051	1,682	2,207	2,678	3,782	3,549	4,111
Alcoholic beverages	451	292	108	236	350	416	696	650	759
Housing	16,887	13,197	9,388	12,143	14,241	16,146	22,815	20,230	26,512
Shelter	9,891	7,532	5,521	6,871	8,168	9,155	13,693	12,103	15,976
Owned dwellings	6,056	3,998	2,087	3,509	4,424	5,607	9,373	8,022	11,312
Rented dwellings	3,186	3,226	3,362	3,150	3,373	2,995	3,122	3,213	2,991
Other lodging	649	308	72	212	371	553	1,198	867	1,672
Utilities, fuels, and public services	3,648	3,318	2,541	3,280	3,333	3,957	4,181	3,935	4,534
Household operations	1,159	726	390	600	845	1,003	1,856	1,495	2,373
Housekeeping supplies	610	516	382	475	564	592	753	676	859
Household furnishings and equipment	1,580	1,106	554	918	1,331	1,439	2,331	2,021	2,770
Apparel and services	1,736	1,329	1,042	1,083	1,540	1,588	2,366	2,226	2,565
Transportation	8,998	7,381	3,835	6,225	8,422	10,342	11,594	10,817	12,710
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	3,210	2,621	932	1,880	3,290	4,090	4,161	3,827	4,641
Gasoline and motor oil	2,756	2,466	1,549	2,318	2,557	3,282	3,223	3,156	3,319
Other vehicle expenses	2,490	2,041	1,191	1,839	2,244	2,666	3,202	3,062	3,405
Public and other transportation	542	253	162	187	331	305	1,008	773	1,345
Health care	3,556	2,885	2,004	2,823	2,949	3,560	4,635	4,196	5,263
Entertainment	2,605	1,901	1,134	1,630	2,118	2,571	3,725	3,220	4,443
Personal care products and services	628	468	292	388	530	627	881	769	1,039
Reading	109	69	29	53	81	107	175	135	232
Education	1,207	564	120	214	892	959	2,244	1,792	2,891
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	332	426	331	497	421	372	179	219	123
Miscellaneous	829	654	307	691	728	703	1,110	926	1,373
Cash contributions	1,913	1,106	599	1,012	1,214	1,473	3,213	2,411	4,364
Personal insurance and pensions	5,591	3,425	1,481	2,847	3,805	5,313	9,084	7,617	11,188
Life and other personal insurance	353	205	107	203	207	281	591	479	752
Pensions and Social Security	5,238	3,220	1,374	2,645	3,598	5,032	8,493	7,139	10,436



Technical Notes

Brief description of the Consumer Expenditure Survey

The current CE began in 1980 and has been conducted continually since then. Its principal objective is to collect information on the buying habits of Americans. Consumer expenditure data are used in a variety of research endeavors by government, business, labor, and academic analysts. In addition, the data are required for the regular revision of the CPI market basket every 2 years. The survey, which is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), consists of two components: A diary (or recordkeeping) survey completed by participating consumer units for two consecutive 1-week periods and an interview survey by which expenditures of consumer units are obtained during five interviews conducted at 3-month intervals. Results in this report are based on integrated data from both surveys. Survey participants record dollar amounts for goods and services purchased during the reporting period, regardless of whether payment is made at the time of purchase. Expenditure amounts include all sales and excise taxes for items purchased by the consumer unit. All business-related expenditures are excluded from both surveys, as are expenditures for which the consumer unit is reimbursed.

Each component of the survey queries an independent sample of CUs that are representative of the U.S. population. For the Diary Survey, about 7,000 CUs are sampled each year. Each CU keeps a diary for two 1-week periods, yielding approximately 14,000 diaries a year. The Interview sample, selected on a rotating panel basis, surveys about 7,000 consumer units each quarter. The rotating panel consists of some CUs dropping out of the survey each quarter, while other CUs come into the survey. Each CU is interviewed once per quarter, for 5 consecutive quarters. Data are collected on an ongoing basis in 91 areas of the United States. The Interview Survey is designed to capture expenditure data that respondents can reasonably recall for a period of 3 months or longer. In general, these expenditures are relatively large, such as expenditures for

real property, automobiles, and major appliances, or they occur on a regular basis, such as rent, utility payments, and insurance premiums. The Interview Survey also collects data on expenditures incurred on leisure trips. Including global estimates of spending for food, it is estimated that about 95 percent of expenditures are covered in the Interview Survey. Nonprescription drugs, household supplies, and personal care items are excluded. The Diary Survey is designed to capture expenditures on small, frequently purchased items that are normally difficult for respondents to recall buying. Detailed records of expenses are kept for food and beverages—consumed either at home or in eating places—and for tobacco, housekeeping supplies, nonprescription drugs, and personal care products and services. Expenditures incurred by members of the consumer unit while away from home overnight or longer are excluded from the Diary Survey. Although this survey was designed to collect information on expenditures that could not be recalled easily over an extended period, respondents are asked to report all expenses (except those spent while traveling overnight) that the CU incurs during the survey week.

Integrated data from the BLS Diary and Interview Surveys provide a complete accounting of consumer expenditures and income that neither survey is designed to do on its own. Data on some expenditure items are collected in only one of the surveys. For example, the Diary Survey does not collect information on reimbursements, whereas the Interview Survey does. Examples of expenditures for which reimbursements are excluded from the Diary Survey are medical care; automobile repair; and construction, repairs, alterations, and maintenance of property. For items that are unique to one survey or the other, the choice of which survey to use as the source of data is obvious. However, there is considerable overlap in coverage between the surveys. Consequently, integrating the data involves determining the appropriate survey component from which to select expenditure items. When data are available from both surveys, the more reliable of the two (as determined by statistical methods) is selected. As a result, some items are selected from the Interview Survey, others from the Diary Survey. Because of the overlap in the

item coverage between the two surveys, the survey source is reviewed every 2 years and statistical methods are used to select the best source. See “CE Source Selection for Publication Tables” in the *Consumer Expenditure Survey Anthology, 2011* (BLS Report 1030) for source selection details.

The population and spending coverage of the CE differs from that of the CPI. The CE data cover the total population including rural areas, whereas the CPI covers only the population in urban and metropolitan areas. Definitions of components also differ between the CE and CPI. For example, homeownership is treated differently in the two surveys: actual expenditures of homeownership are reported in the CE, whereas the CPI uses a rental-equivalence approach that estimates the change in the cost of obtaining, in the rental marketplace, services equivalent to those provided by owner-occupied homes.

Interpreting the data

Expenditures are averages for consumer units with specified characteristics, regardless of whether a particular unit incurred an expense for a specific item during the recordkeeping period. The average expenditure for an item may be considerably lower than the expenditure by the CUs that purchased the item. The less frequently an item is purchased, the greater the difference between the average for all CUs and the average for those purchasing the item. Similarly, an individual CU may spend more or less than the average, depending on its particular characteristics. Factors such as income, age of family members, geographic location, and personal preference also influence expenditures. Furthermore, even within groups with similar characteristics, the distribution of expenditures varies substantially. These points should be considered in relating reported averages to individual circumstances. Users of these survey data should also keep in mind that prices for many goods and services have risen since the survey was conducted. For example, all prices, as measured by the CPI-U, increased by 2.3 percent between 2012 (annual average index) and February 2014 (not seasonally adjusted). In addition, sample surveys are subject to two types of error: sampling and nonsampling.

Sampling errors occur because the data are collected from a sample representing the population, rather than from the entire population. Nonsampling errors result from the inability or unwillingness of respondents to provide correct information, differences in interviewers’ abilities, mistakes in recording or coding, and other processing errors.

Tables and data

Tables in this report include integrated data from both the Diary and Interview components of the CE, enabling data users to associate the full range of expenditures with consumers’ demographic characteristics. Tables show data classified by income quintile, income class, age of the reference person, size of the consumer unit, composition of the consumer unit, number of earners, housing tenure, type of area (urban or rural), race, Hispanic origin, region of residence, occupation, and education.³ These are the same classifications published in previous BLS reports and bulletins. Tables for the aforementioned classifications, but with more detail than is given in this report, can be accessed on the CE page of the BLS website (<http://www.bls.gov/cex>). Also available are tables showing average annual data over a 2-year period for 1) income before taxes, cross-tabulated by age, consumer unit size, or region; 2) single consumers by gender, cross-tabulated by either income or age; and 3) selected metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs). Annual data are available for 1984–2012. Other survey information available on the website includes answers to frequently asked questions, a glossary of terms, and order forms for survey products. Beginning with the 2000 data, estimates of standard errors for integrated Diary and Interview Survey data are also available.

Other available data

The 2012 CE public-use microdata, including Interview Survey data, Diary Survey data, and paradata (information about the survey process), are now available on the CE website for free electronic download. The Interview files contain expenditure data in two different formats: MTBI files that present monthly values in an item-coding framework based on the CPI pricing scheme, and EXPN files that organize expenditures by the section of the Interview Survey’s questionnaire in which they are

collected. Expenditure values on EXPN files cover different periods depending on the specific questions asked, and the files also contain relevant non-expenditure information not found on the MTBI files. Past releases of post 1995 CE public-use microdata for purchase will become available on the CE website for download. The 2004 to 2011 releases are already available online. Prior releases will be posted incrementally online in reverse chronological order through the 1996 release. For releases prior to 1996 and those not yet available online, users can continue to purchase USB flash drives using the public-use microdata order form (<http://www.bls.gov/cex/pumhome.htm>). All future releases of public-use microdata will solely be available online for free download.

The Consumer Expenditure program publishes CE articles in **BEYOND THE NUMBERS**. These reports include analyses of expenditure data as they apply to various topics of interest, as well as methodological and research

articles pertaining to a number of survey topics. The most recent of these reports, *New education classification better reflects income and spending patterns in the Consumer Expenditure Survey*. Additional CE analyses also are presented in articles in the *Monthly Labor Review*. These reports can be found at <http://www.bls.gov/cex/csxart.htm>. For more detailed information on the availability of current and earlier data, call (202) 691-6900; Email: cexinfo@bls.gov. Online at <http://www.bls.gov/cex>, or contact the Division of Consumer Expenditure Survey, Office of Prices and Living Conditions, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE., Washington, DC 20212-0001.

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